

Town of Little Creek Council Meeting Minutes for March 7, 2022

Prior to the official start of the monthly scheduled meeting the swearing in of new Board of Commissioners for the Town of Little Creek was conducted by Levy Court Commissioner Allan Angel at 6:30 pm. After confirming the new commissioners, Commissioner Angel presented the Town Council with a check for \$1,000 on behalf of himself and his late father.

The meeting of the Little Creek Town Board was called to order at 7:00 pm by Commissioner Edward Strouse. Pledge of Allegiance was recited by Board members and residents in attendance and a moment of silence was observed. Roll call was taken by Commissioner Theresa May and five Commissioners were present: Ed Strouse, Carol Puleo, Adrienne Hegman, Jason Arrington, and Theresa May. Twenty-seven members of the public were in attendance for the general meeting: Carol Williams, Bill Clark, Scott and Cheryl Bundeck, Judy Hegman, Doug Hegman, Sr., Sue Freese, Glenn Gauvry, Clay Crommett, Ariane Mueller, Penny Gentry, Jim Woznicki, Ken Frazier, Christian Wessells, Kim Daybysle, Alex and George Przybylski, Angelia Strouse, Mitchell and Megan Scott, Rod Hegman, Jason Courtney, Stephany Courtney, and Jada Courtney, Sam and Terry Gentry, Andrew May. In addition to the above mentioned, State Representative Bill Carson and Levy Court Commissioner Allan Angel were also in attendance.

Motion to deviate from normal meeting business for a special presentation was made by Adrienne Hegman and seconded by Carol Puleo. Motion was passed unanimously and State Representative Bill Carson (28th District) presented tributes to outgoing Commissioners Judy Hegman (Treasurer of 35 years) and Penny Gentry (Secretary/Clerk of 30 years) for their service to the town. Outgoing Mayor, Glenn Gauvry, delivered words of gratitude for their years of service also. This was followed by the presentation of gift cards by Commissioner Strouse to Judy and Penny along with kind words of affirmation for their service to the town board and greater community of Little Creek.

Upon returning to the scheduled agenda, elections were held by ballot to determine the roles the new commissioners would fulfill. Five ballots were cast and recorded. Upon tallying and verifying the ballots, the following results were determined:

Commissioner Edward Strouse – 5 votes for the position of President/Mayor

Commissioner Adrienne Hegman – 5 votes for the position of Treasurer

Commissioner Theresa May – 5 votes for the position of Clerk/Secretary

Commissioner Carol Puleo and Board President Edward Strouse will be designated to sign checks on behalf of the Town of Little Creek, Delaware

The meeting minutes from the previous month were electronically sent to the incoming commissioners for their review prior to this meeting. All incoming commissioners to the board reviewed the minutes from February 7, 2022, and Commissioner Carol Puleo made a motion to accept the written minutes received from the previous secretary/clerk. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Adrienne Hegman and put to a full board vote where it was passed.

The Treasurer's report was read aloud by the previous Treasurer, Judy Hegman, to the full assembly. A motion to accept the report from the February 7, 2022, was made by Commissioner Theresa May and seconded by Commissioner Jason Arrington. When presented for a vote to the full Board it was passed unanimously.

Judy Hegman stated the pending bills and provided information on bills paid by the former administration. A motion was made by Commissioner Puleo to pay the bills. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Arrington and put to full board for a vote. The Board unanimously passed the motion to pay the current bills.

Committee Reports

a) Crime Watch – Commissioner Strouse

- Attended Crime Watch monthly meeting, at Levy Court in Dover, DE
- Hot spots for 2022 were identified by area law-enforcement. Towns that were declared hot spots were Cheswold and Smyrna.
- Commissioner Strouse explained that Cheswold and Smyrna have their own Police force and asked for small towns, like Little Creek, that do not have their own Police department or a regular police presence, to be considered as potential hot spots.

b) Parks and Recreation – Commissioner Hegman

- April 17th the town will be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt that will be free to the community.
- May become an annual event held in memory of the resident who started the tradition years ago

i) Dog Park

- Barrel Style trash cans need repair and/or replacement. Commissioner Arrington volunteered to take care of this task.
- Levy Court Commission Allan Angel is still looking into options to provide some shade in this area

c) Code Enforcement – Commissioner Arrington

- Violations and complaints should be submitted to President/ Mayor Ed Strouse and will be reviewed prior to letters of notice being mailed
- Commissioner Puleo will be writing the letters for code violations

d) Rental Properties – Commissioner Puleo

- Still trying to contact the previous Commissioner who kept track of and communicated with rental property owners
- i) Duck Shop: Upstairs is being rented
- Question was raised about a need to send letters to owner and renter regarding rental fees owed to town
- Was determined by the Board that there may be a need to revisit the current Town Rental Ordinances and update them

e) Properties of Concern:

- i) 225 Main St
- ii) 316 Main St
- iii) 326 Main St
- iv) 364 Main St
- v) 447 Main St
- vi) 593 Main St
- vii) 614 Main St

f) Planning Commission – Carol Williams

- One application has been submitted for building permit approval
- Mr. Michael Steininger, Sr. applied for approval to gain a permit to rebuild the house at 326 Main Street which suffered a structure fire on February 6, 2022. Mr. Steininger also submitted a money order in the amount of \$10.00 as required with his application for approval.

Old Business

a) Northern Flood Study

- Study was published on website
- Commissioner Strouse will meet with Sharon and Jules, who were involved in conducting the study. The suggestion was made to implement part of the plan beginning west to east with the area of flooding at the ditch between the field owned by the Cartanza family eastward to the Jarman property.
- The hold up with the other portion of the plan stems from the pipe that needs to be replaced under Route 9 (Main Street) as there is a conflict of information on who is responsible for repairing it. Some agencies say it falls to the Town of Little Creek and others think it is the responsibility of the County or Del Dot.
- In 1966, records show that the Town took responsibility for the pipe, but Route 9 is a state road so nothing can be done until there is clarification regarding who is responsible for repairs.
- During that time, Del Dot made deals with small towns to take on this responsibility and the towns were expected to work with legislators when repairs were needed
- This study only went as far as the Stone Tavern and found the following:
 - o The pipes are too small for the current waterflow
 - o The area in front of the Post Office is collapsed
- Would like to move forward with the area between Gentry's and Carol's house
- Important to start inside Town Limits: Potential Catch Basins
 - o Dog Park
 - o Old Laughing Gull
- Town's people know, and study proves what is going on with the flooding. The Town can use this data as evidence to support requests for funding.

b) Signs at Dog Park

- This idea has been submitted for consideration but calls for reflection and thought before moving forward
- If approved for implementation, it will call for changes being made to the current LDO, which was recently approved by the outgoing Town Council Board of Commissioners
- People using Dog Park were asked how they feel about putting signs on the fence and they were not in favor of this
- Town Council Board Members are exploring other ways to get advertising for the Little Creek Grill
- Spare change lockbox was suggested for donations to the Dog Park
- Also investigating providing an electronic version for donations to support the Dog Park

c) Traffic Calming

i) Banners

- Several banners have come down from poles in town
- Need to be re-hung, properly using different brackets
- Susan said there are some extra brackets at Town Hall
- Glenn will give information for the company the banners were ordered from and how to install the banners properly so they can be placed back on the poles

ii) Electronic Speed Detection Traffic Sign

- Lieutenant Coleman placed the sign at the south end of town
- May be removed

iii) Ed contacted Jackie McDermott

- Can get message boards from Del Dot
- Del Dot has funds available to purchase signs for target areas
- Can get enforcement in the form of State Trooper presence, but unsure when or for how long

d) ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act)

- Town of Little Creek is eligible to tap into \$17,000 but currently has access to \$8,000
- Open to causes other than those related to COVID-19 if it benefits the town
- Can be used for storm water drainage repair issue
 - o Match money funds??

e) Land Development Ordinances

- New LDO was passed on Monday, January 3, 2022
- Town Council Board Members would like to adjudicate the 3 responses that were sent by residents as concerns

f) Cavaliers Property

- New owner wants to use the property for a boat repair business
- The property has not yet transferred to the new owner, but they will owe the Town transfer fees
- Judy does not have an address for the new owner at this time, but was able to disclose that the taxes on the property were paid last week
- Aaron Black is the contact from the LLC that made the sale
- The Town does not currently have paperwork regarding this property

g) Storm Water

- Need to take closer look at Catch Basins

h) Website

- Commissioner Adrienne Hegman will oversee updating and maintaining the Town of Little Creek official website

i) Dover Post

- Commissioner Theresa May proposed putting a Dover Post newspaper box in town to provide the paper to residents without having unwanted delivery to individual houses
- Residents in attendance and Council Board Commissioners were in favor of this proposal
- Commissioner May had placed a call to the Dover Post office and was awaiting a response. She said she would continue to pursue this plan and what would be involved
- A resident suggested approaching the owner of the Little Creek Grill to ask if a box could be placed at his business and another resident suggested placing two in town, one outside the Post Office and one outside the restaurant

j) Commissioner Theresa May brought to the attention of the Town Council Board Members that the former Code Enforcement Officer, Dennis Russum, was requesting payment of \$180.00 for performing duties assigned during the 3 months under the former Town Council Commissioners.

- As he did not provide an itemized list of when he was in town and what he did, and there is no way to verify these things at this time, it was decided that payment would be deferred until such time as he can provide this information to the Town Council Board of Commissioners.

New Business

a) Zoom Account – Commissioner Strouse

- \$149.00 annually for Town Council to set up a Zoom account
- Can be terminated early, without penalty, if it is not being utilized
- Commissioner Jason Arrington expressed concerns over who would have access to the meetings and the need for rules to be established for Town Zoom meetings. He also expressed his belief that anyone wishing to make comment during online meetings, just as if present at a live meeting, must have a stake in the Town.
- The concerns mentioned were discussed and addressed

- It was agreed that rules for these meetings must be written out prior to conducting meetings online and that certain standards will need to be followed.
 - It was also proposed by Commissioner Strouse that the Town purchase the Zoom account and allow the Firehouse to have access to it for their use in holding meetings
 - Following the discussion by the Board of Commissioner of the above concerns and proposals, Commissioner May made a motion for approval of the Town Council Zoom account which was seconded by Commissioner Puleo and unanimously adopted by the Board of Commissioners.
- b) Trash Contract – Commissioner Strouse
- Commissioner Strouse shared information discovered when researching this concern
 - He learned that because the Town is incorporated, it is not eligible for County trash pickup
 - Because the Town is included on County Wastewater, the question was raised, “Why not trash?” Levy Court Commissioner Angel responded that he would investigate this
 - Commissioner Strouse stated the following:
 - o He would contact all the trash companies currently working in the Town and look at which one offers the best price
 - o Looking for a group rate or ALL or nothing: Area residents not just inside Town Limits and needs to include Bulk Pick Up too
 - o Need to find out how payments would be made if moved to a Town Trash Contract
 - It was decided that a survey should be sent out to ALL residents to get their feedback concerning this
 - o Survey Monkey??
 - There is concern about trash/garbage being left behind houses. These houses have landlords and no tenants. Conditions are favorable to draw rats and other animals that could potentially pose health risks/ issues to residents.
 - There is a concern regarding the condition of Port Mahon Rd. Glass and debris is scattered along the shoulder and could potentially pose issues for pets when being walked along that stretch of road. Commissioners Puleo and May suggested getting BSA Troops involved in assisting with clean up and other projects in Town. This would provide needed assistance for residents and needed service hours for the scouts.
 - o Port Mahon is an adopted road and in years past, volunteers affiliated with the Town and the organization that adopted the road worked together once a year to pick up trash
 - Suggestion was made to hold an official Spring Clean-Up of the Town that would be open to other communities as well as the Town residents and Scouts
 - There was also a brief discussion of developing a list of improvements that could be done to the Town and offered as possible Eagle Scout Projects.

- c) Community Partnerships – Commissioner Strouse
- i) Church – Suggested Town partner with the Little Creek UMC for some events – two-way street
 - ii) Fire House – Firehouse agreed to continue to shovel and plow out the town and offered to continue to provide use of the Firehall for holding Council/Town related meetings. Moving forward, the Fire Company Report will be a standing report delivered at Town Council meetings.
 - iii) Pickering Beach – Suggested Town partner with Pickering Beach Community to hold events and help each other to promote both communities
 - iv) Kitts Hummock – Suggested Town reach out to Kitts Hummock Community in the hopes of partnering with them also to promote and hold events. Partnering with other small towns near our town gives us a larger voice in uniting on relevant issues when approaching our legislators.

Public Comment

- Floor was opened for public comment
- Bill Clark proposed having a Community Yard Sale. Could possibly work with firehouse on this.
- Firehouse President Kenny Frazier stated that the fire company was looking forward to working with the new Town Council Board of Commissioners, thanked those on the Board for stepping up and wished them well
- Several other residents also expressed well wishes and thanked the new Commissioners for stepping up to represent the Town's interests
- Fire Chief Scott Bundek addressed the group about adopting a program currently being utilized by fire companies in the Wilmington area called Sound The Alarm. This program would involve firefighters from the Little Creek Volunteer Fire Department going door-to-door throughout town checking smoke detectors to determine if they are working, replacing those that are not with new ones, and installing them in homes that do not have them. Per Chief Bundek, the program would start in April 2022.

Adjournment -

Motion was made to adjourn meeting by Commissioner Jason Arrington and seconded by Commissioner Carol Puleo and put to the full Board for vote. All members having voted "Aye" the motion to adjourn was passed and the meeting was officially ended at 8:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa May

Secretary

